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Audiotape ID number:

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Guest (s):

Title:

Note: Questions were paraphrased and/or shortened by the transcriber. For the exact question, please consult the audiotapes.

6432 – Race Problems in the North

Guest: Thurmond

Morphew: Recent news accounts have focused on the North, how did this develop?

Thurmond: Well, there have been many more riots and many more demonstrations and much more racial agitation and discord and dissension and trouble between the races in the North than there have been in the South. The people in the South have had no racial trouble except that which has been inspired by outsiders chiefly. In the North, it's a different situation. It's bred from within the states. And as I have stated on many occasions, the communists have not only infiltrated these demonstrations but they have inspired these demonstrations. And in many cases have directed these demonstrations. Communism is at the bottom of the Negro demonstrations.

Morphew: Were people sent into Harlem and Rochester to start the riots like they were in the North?

Thurmond: Well, Dick, in my opinion, there's being a button pressed. Whether it's in Harlem or whether it's in Rochester, whether it's in Chicago or whether it's in Detroit or wherever it is, the communists decide what to do, when to do it, and where to do it. There's a common control because the pattern of these demonstrations is too similar. The results are too similar and there has to be a central control and in my judgment that is unquestionably what is happening.

Morphew: What do they want?

Thurmond: Well, you are correct when you say that. New York state has all kinds of civil rights laws. They have a Fair Employment Practices Commission, so to speak, to

guarantee employment, the kind of law that was contained in Title II of the civil rights bill which was called public accommodations. They have had that for years.

Morphew: And also on housing...

Thurmond: They've had the open housing, and yet in spite of that, you find more segregation in Harlem than you do in any place in the United States. Far more than there is in any city in the South. They are completely segregated there and in spite of all of these civil rights laws, they have had more trouble, more racial trouble in the North than they have in the South. And it goes to show that the passage of laws will not stop these demonstrations. It goes to show that the passage of laws is a result of play being made by politicians to get the Negro bloc vote. Laws will not cure this trouble. Whatever adjustments are going to come are going to come in the hearts of people and they are going to come because of good will. You can't just pass a law and that's the end of it. If you remember when the 18th Amendment was passed, and it wasn't adhered to, it wasn't respected. And the people of New York City and of New York State were some of those who violated it the most. It did not have public support and backing and therefore it failed. This so-called civil rights bill, eventually, in my judgment, certainly a big portion of it will be repealed because it's not practical, it's not wise, it doesn't make common sense and it does not have public support, and eventually, I predict that it will be repealed.

Morphew: Recent issue of U.S. News and World Report, interviewing congressmen, quoting congressmen who identify that the north has the real problem and the south was right from the beginning

Thurmond: Dick, I don't think there is any question. I've talk to a great many members of the Congress and they are beginning to feel now, too, that laws are not the answers to this question.

Morphew: White backlash as an accurate term or more of a white awakening?

Thurmond: Well, I think it's more of an awakening if you wish to call it that. I believe Governor Wallace received 43% of the votes in the state of Maryland. He was running against a man who I think was born in Maryland, Senator Brewster, he's well-known there, elected to the Senate there 2 years ago, representing the president of the United States in this race and yet, Governor Wallace, who was comparatively a stranger to the people of Maryland until he went there to campaign, Governor Wallace received 43% of the votes, showing they're awakening there, showing that the people are beginning to rise up and rebel against what is taking place. When they force people to associate with people they do not wish to, when they force them to change their social patterns and when by law they try to compel them to do things they do not wish to do with regard to their associations and their educational institutions and other institutions which have followed traditions down through the years, it's bound to cause trouble.

Morphew: White people in the north are finally realizing the root of these problems?

Thurmond: I don't think that's any question. I remember I mentioned in the debate with Senator Hubert Humphrey some months ago when the question of employment came up, I asked the question, I said, well whose jobs are these people going to get? Are they Negroes' jobs or white people's jobs? It would have to come from one category or the other. We see here an effort to try to place people in positions whether they are qualified or not. And if you remember, in Chicago, why, they threw out giving a test. You couldn't even give a test to determine if a man is capable to fill a position. Well, after all, I think it is depriving the American people of one of their foremost rights not to allow them to choose their own employees, not to permit them to choose their employees or to fire their employees or to promote their employees or to demote them. I think that's a fundamental right of the American people and I think that any law that contravenes that right also contravenes the constitution of the United States.

Morphew: The CRM has been described as quote, the Negro Revolution...is it really revolutionary in its nature?

Thurmond: Well, they call it a revolution and in a way I guess it's a desire to change things around and of course what they want to change, they wish to supplant a democracy and capitalism with dictatorship and socialism. Now, the communists who are inspiring these revolutions have that as their goal or they do other things. They bring about domestic disturbances but that's their main goal. If you want to call it a political and economic revolution. And they want to bring socialism to this country, they want to bring dictatorship because the more laws you have, the more power you concentrate in any one place in government, the more tyranny the people are going to suffer, and I predict that within few years if the Congress keeps on giving power to the executive branch of the government, and if the people stand idly by and apathetic and permit the Congress to do that, that the President of the United States, with 20 years, will almost have the powers of a dictator. And that's the reason I think we've got to try to arouse the public to the importance of these things. This civil rights bill, a law which was recently passed, concentrates tremendous power in Washington. There's only so much power, where's it come from? They have to take it away from the people, and take it away from the states when they bring it to Washington. It's a very dangerous situation, it's a very dangerous precedent to set and I regret that this law passed. And all of the laws are being passed, too, to bring more power to Washington and we've got to guard against that. Down through history, men have suffered, not because of other men especially, but they have suffered because of government. The greatest enemy of mankind has not been mankind, it's been government, and that's the thing that can bring about dictatorship over the people, tyranny to the people. If you remember Thomas Jefferson says, once you can't trust any man with power, you've got to chain him down to the Constitution, and he visualized then there would be efforts made to enlarge the power of the presidency and he said, therefore you've got to chain him to the constitution. But what we're doing now is Congress is passing laws to give all of this power to the president, which in the end, I think can be very detrimental and very destructive to freedom as we know it.